

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4072

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

S E C R E T BANGKOK 9524

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL AND AMBASSADOR OSBORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS/ PFOR, ASEC, MASS, SNAR, TH, BM, US

SUBJECT: ASSISTANCE TO BURMESE NARCOTICS EFFORTS

REF: BANGKOK 9523

1. THE REFERENCED TELEGRAM IS A MESSAGE PREPARED BY CONSUL MONTGOMERY IN CHIANG MAI COMMENTING ON OUR PROPOSED ASSISTANCE TO BURMA'S ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAM. CONSUL MONTGOMERY ARGUES STRONGLY THAT OUR AID PACKAGE TO THE GUB WOULD BE OF ONLY LIMITED ASSISTANCE TO BURMA'S EFFORTS TO INTERDICT THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS AND WOULD RISK DRAGGING US INTO THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE GUB AND DISSIDENT GROUPS. HE BELIEVES IT MIGHT WELL PROVOKE RETALIATION BY THESE GROUPS AGAINST AMERICANS IN NORTHERN THAILAND.

2. I DO NOT FULLY SHARE THESE VIEWS, BUT IN LINE WITH THE SECRETARY'S POLICIES I WANT TO ENCOURAGE ALL OFFICERS OF THIS MISSION TO CALL THE SHOTS AS THEY SEE THEM WITHIN OFFICIAL CHANNELS. AS A RESULT, I BELIEVE YOU SHOULD BOTH BE AWARE OF THE VIEWS OF THIS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE OFFICER WHO HAS FOLLOWED THE SITUATION IN THE THAI-BURMA BORDER AREA CLOSELY FOR THREE YEARS FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF NORTHERN THAILAND.

3. MY OWN FEELING WOULD BE THAT WE ARE TOO FAR DOWN THE ROAD

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IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GUB TO CHANGE COURSE AND THAT

THERE ARE PROBABLY ADVANTAGES, ON BALANCE, TO GOING AHEAD WITH THE PROPOSED AID. HOWEVER, THE CHIANG MAI TELEGRAM MAY HELP US AVOID SOME OF THE PITFALLS WHICH GO ALONG WITH THE PROPOSAL AND MAY BE USEFUL IN OFFERING INSIGHTS IN HOW WE PRESENT THIS AID IN WASHINGTON, RANGOON AND BANGKOK.

4. ANY COMMENTS WOULD BE MOST WELCOME.

KINTNER

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NNN

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